

Enabling Scalable AI Innovation with Lumen® NaaS

Lumen and its NaaS solution has enabled AI2 Incubator to deliver a flexible, secure, and high-performance environment for AI startups—fueling rapid innovation today and providing a scalable foundation for the future of AI entrepreneurship.

AI2 Incubator

www.ai2incubator.com

- AI2 Incubator is Seattle’s premier launchpad for early-stage AI startups, providing hands-on support, mentorship, and resources to founders
- The incubator offers a collaborative workspace, technical guidance, and funding (up to \$600,000 per company), helping founders create market-ready products, and secure venture investment
- AI2 Incubator leverages Lumen’s flexible, high-performance network infrastructure to support rapid growth and a thriving community of entrepreneurs

Challenges

- Faced unpredictable, high-volume bandwidth demands due to AI model training, large data transfers, and frequent large-scale events
- Needed to rapidly onboard new startups and support hybrid teams without delays
- Required enterprise-grade security and cost efficiency to support startups while optimizing operational spend

Solutions

- Deployed [Lumen® Network-as-a-Service \(NaaS\)](#), increasing bandwidth from 1Gbps to 10Gbps
- Achieved rapid network deployment in 11 business days, far faster than traditional solutions
- Leveraged integrated security (including DDoS protection and Lumen Defender), and consumption-based pricing

Results

- Seamlessly powered over 80 events and supported 15,000+ visitors in just six months
- Enabled startups to scale operations, collaborate, and innovate without connectivity constraints, accelerating productivity
- Optimized costs and resources by paying hourly for bandwidth used



10Gbps

Scaled bandwidth, powering seamless AI model training and rapid startup growth

15,000

Visitors at AI House in just six months

11

Business days to deploy network, supporting agile operations

Challenge

Fueling the AI startup machine

As a launchpad for some of the most ambitious AI startups in Seattle, AI2 Incubator (AI House) operates in a uniquely demanding environment. The organization's core mission is to provide founders with the resources, mentorship, and infrastructure needed to turn innovative ideas into market-ready companies.

On any given day, the space might be filled with teams training large AI/ML models, transferring massive datasets, or hosting events like hackathons and workshops with hundreds of participants. This volatility made it impossible to rely on traditional, fixed-bandwidth solutions without either over-provisioning (and overspending) or risking performance bottlenecks.

New startups move in frequently, and existing teams scale up or graduate, requiring network services to be provisioned, upgraded, or decommissioned with minimal lead time. All of this had to be achieved while maintaining strict cost controls, as the incubator's non-profit-backed model meant that every dollar spent on infrastructure was a dollar not invested in founders and community programming.

Solution

Flexible Bandwidth Integrated with Security

To address these multifaceted challenges, AI2 Incubator partnered with Lumen to implement Network-as-a-Service (NaaS) for agility, scalability, and security. The centerpiece of this solution is programmable bandwidth scaling, which allows the incubator to dynamically adjust network capacity, enabling the network to be scaled up quickly—or scaled down, optimizing performance and cost.

Deployment speed was another critical factor. Lumen delivered and activated the NaaS solution in just 11 business days, and deeply integrated security features into the solution. With Lumen Defender and DDoS Mitigation, AI2 Incubator benefits from enterprise-grade protection. Security policies can be managed centrally and adapted as new startups join or requirements change, helping support compliance and reduce operational risk.

Solution Set

- [Lumen® Network-as-a-Service \(NaaS\)](#)
- [Lumen® DDoS Mitigation Solutions](#)
- [Lumen Defender^{\(SM\)}](#)

"We turned to Lumen to support [our] growing data demands. With plans to scale to 1,000 co-working desks, we needed future-ready bandwidth that could grow with us. Lumen's flexible, high-capacity network helps us ensure we're ready for what's next." – **Audrey Yun, Events & Community Manager, AI2 Incubator**

Results and Future Plans

Startups That Scale with Ambition

The next phase of AI2's growth includes deeper integration of Lumen's Edge Cloud and network automation capabilities to support this growth. Strategically, the incubator is committed to advancing the application of AI across industries, supporting startups building vertical AI applications, leveraging AI for operational efficiency, and facilitating hackathons and workshops to accelerate AI adoption. As hybrid and distributed work models become the norm, AI2 Incubator will continue to invest in infrastructure that enables seamless collaboration, and will seek to partner with Lumen for programmable, secure connectivity that will play a large part in Seattle's AI future.

As hybrid and distributed work models become the norm, AI2 Incubator will further invest in infrastructure that enables seamless collaboration for both on-premises and remote teams, relying on Lumen's programmable, secure connectivity as the backbone. The organization's vision is to solidify Seattle's position as a global center for AI innovation, attracting top talent, fostering public-private partnerships, and creating a launchpad where the next generation of AI companies can scale and thrive.

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